the novel's appeal to populism actually instantiates the imperial desire for the expansion of the "frontier."

Providing another layer to his critical geography of the Pacific, Eperjesi's final chapters examine Maxine Hong Kinston's *China Men* as well as the film *Memories of a Forgotten War* by Camilla Benolirao Griggers and Sari Lluch Delana. In these works, Eperjesi finds an important revision or counter-myth to the Pacific as American frontier. The general narration of Kingston's *China Men*, for instance, traces the movement of Chinese peoples over the Pacific, but as Eperjesi notes, this movement doesn't come to resolution or rest within a homeland, neither in China nor in America. Instead, the movement and transience of this population retains a transnational status. Unlike the romanticized and heroic frontiersman who uproots himself for the freedom of the open territory or seas—as Eperjesi recalls of Melville's Ishmael—Kingston's narrative of modernity depicts a population who must find a "flexible relationship to capital" and strategies for survival within a transnational arrangements of economic and state powers (137).

If there is a shortcoming in Eperjesi's book, it may be that it, like previous criticism, has drawn so heavily on "myth" as a critical category for analyzing U.S. imperial power. As a mode of analysis and critique, "myth" can all too often constitute the limits of our thinking. Yet, as is made evident by the constellation of chapters that form *The Imperialist Imaginary*, Eperjesi has nevertheless offered a significant contribution to our understanding of an American Pacific discourse, specifically, and the modus operandi of American power, generally, within transnational configurations. This research and well-written text will be helpful for reshaping a field of knowledge that arises out of the intersections of American literary and post-colonial studies.

Jeffrey Hole

Peter Childs. *Modernism and the Post-Colonial: Literature and Empire 1885–1930*. New York: Continuum, 2007. Pp.152. $110 ($137 Cdn).

What happens to our understanding of modernism when we read its texts through the lens of empire? The answer in brief, which Peter Child's study, *Modernism and the Post-Colonial* probes in detail, is that "British modernist writing provides fertile ground for further post-colonial contextualization" (1), since "modernism [was] itself a mulatto movement of hybrid texts

and mongrel selves"(20). Using Bhabha and hybridity as read along side of Fanon and Said as his chief theoretical coordinates, Childs emphasizes the "ambiguities and ambivalences with regard to colonialism and the British Empire" (1) in British modernist texts. At the start of the period under examination (1885–1930), empire is a symbol of Englishness, by the close it is an embarrassment, something to be hidden away, seen at best peripherally. To develop this argument, Childs gives close attention to Conan Doyle, Haggard, Kipling, Conrad, Forster, Mansfield and Lawrence, situating them as well in provocative relation to Orwell, Joyce, Eliot, and both Virginia and Leonard Woolf (and others, such as Wagner, T. E. Lawrence, May Sinclair). The text is organized thematically with most of these writers making illustrative appearances in several chapters so that it is difficult to get a reading of any one of the texts under scrutiny, but much that is pertinent and important gets said and fascinating juxtapositions enable important insights.

The crucial and necessary thesis that underwrites this study is that modernism is at once "complicit with imperial power" *and* "the pre-eminent literature of colonial crisis" (43). To make this argument, Childs moves back and forth among his exemplary texts and stirs together, among others, Said, Raymond Williams, Patrick Williams, Patrick Brantlinger, Simon Gikandi so rapidly that his own position and its reasoning sometime get diluted. But the point is still clear: modernist writings "are neither collectively pro- nor anti-colonial, are not clearly supportive of racist or anti-racist positions" (43). Indeed, Childs shows how, "high modernism took delivery of, as much as it drew on, voices and styles from the outposts of Empire" (38). In a manner more polemical than analytic, he shows how the "image of the colonial ideal unmasked by Conrad is dead in Woolf [the reference here is to Bernard's reflecting on Percival's death in *The Waves*], as it is opposed in Forster and vociferously discredited in Orwell" (81). This statement concludes the chapter that uses Said's "view of a modernist reaction of contemplative irony to otherness" (65) for its reading of Conrad, and Bhabha's claim that "in the very practice of domination the language of the master becomes hybrid" (79) for a reading of paranoia in Forster, although there is also considerable cross cutting among critics, theorists, and novelists here.

Childs is generous to a fault in citing other critics and scholars in support of and sometimes in disagreement with the point he is arguing. So for example, within the larger argument illustrating "how modernist writers sought to expunge images of their imperial fathers" (28) (Mansfield's story "The Daughters of the Late Colonel" offered as the exemplary text), he uses Daniel Bivona's argument about the overlap of notions of the primitive, the

childlike, the alien in the late 19th century with Haggard's Zulus as example, as well as work on Haggard by Anne McClintock and W.R. Katz. He then (this all happens in rapid succession in a couple of pages) moves to Martin Green on the impetus for adventure as an escape from the authority of a father figure, illustrated by Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*. Such escape, Childs argues, involves a return with spurs earned, the mission undertaken in the first place for acceptance, a move that the modernist writer does not make, particularly when gender differences are noted: the "toppling of the father figure for males was a step towards power, whereas female writers saw the overthrow of patriarchy as liberation" (31). This leads to a sequence of references to Woolf's *Diaries*, *To the Lighthouse,* and *Mrs. Dalloway*, and then to *Three Guineas*'s argument that women were "excluded from the national narrative by imperialism" (31), concluding with Jane Garrity's reading of *The Waves* as part of this argument. But this rapid movement back and forth between texts and critics makes it difficult to identify the originality of many of Child's observations, even as the few paragraphs I have just cited are genuinely illuminating.

Although the experience of reading this study may induce vertigo, especially if one tries holding all its pieces, allusions, and primary and secondary texts together, it is still often productive of new insights. Its thematic trails are multiple: how "empires occupy space … in the way that a palimpsest lies over another text … how the inevitable cultural imbrications are represented in modernist writing" (84–5), or how, following Bhakhtin, the chronotype can be seen to work in modernist colonial writing, figured most often in terms of unrepresentability. Throughout, crucial questions are raised and important historical contexts are filled in; for example, the Berlin Conference of 1884–5, Léopold's role there, and the Act issuing from that conference "as the legitimating document of the scramble for Africa" (94) in the discussion of *Heart of Darkness* as well as of *The Inheritors*, the novel that Conrad wrote with Ford Madox Ford.

Modernism and the Post-Colonial probably will not satisfy those who view the imperial encounter primarily in terms of appropriation and silencing, for while Childs recognizes these as realities, he finds in the writings over the half century of his study something more nuanced and contradictory (this is especially the case in his readings of Kipling and Conrad). It is thus fitting that he give last words to Leonard Woolf, "an imperial civil servant who was an anti-imperialist, and a central but also peripheral modernist" (129). For Woolf both figures and points to the cross currents and contradictions that this study follows through in engaging albeit occasionally frustrating fashion, especially when one considers that his 1913 novel, *The Village in the Jungle*, is

"closer in many ways to Achebe *Things Fall Apart* (1958) than Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*, though only published a year after" (17).

Judith Scherer Herz

John O'Brian and Peter White, ed. *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007. Pp. 392. $49.95 paperback.

Of all the media through which the Group of Seven's conservative, empty and overwhelmingly white wilderness-based aesthetic of Canadian nationhood has been disseminated, the lavishly illustrated coffee-table book must rank—alongside an endless stream of calendars and reproduction prints—among the most pervasive. Continuing this tradition in the last decade or so, widely available, impeccably presented volumes such as Charles C. Hill's *The Group of Seven: Art for a Nation* (1995) and David P. Silcox's *The Group of Seven and Tom Thomson* (2003) have worked to preserve a mythic association between these artists and their nation. Radical artistic and critical reappraisals of this mythic link, meanwhile, have all-too-often operated at a much lower level on the public radar, reaching (with a few notable exceptions) only the relatively small readerships of academic journals and art-critical essay collections.

At first glance, *Beyond Wilderness: The Group of Seven, Canadian Identity, and Contemporary Art* seems set to follow in this tradition. This weighty, immaculately produced and colourful book, its cover adorned with detail from Tom Thomson's *Jack Pine*, appears unlikely to offer a substantial challenge to the orthodoxy epitomized by Thomson's iconic canvas. Yet closer examination reveals a blurring of the beloved masterpiece: this is *Jack Pine* with a difference, as photographed by Michael Snow for his dizzyingly disorienting 1977 exhibition *Plus Tard*. It is fitting that an image from *Plus Tard*, a selection of blurry photographs of the Group of Seven collection on display at Canada's National Gallery, forms the cover of *Beyond Wilderness*. Like *Plus Tard*, John O'Brian and Peter White's collection seeks to defamiliarize the experience of viewing the Group's landscapes, blurring the edges of their bold assertions and allowing the troublingly silent voices at their margins to articulate themselves.

The book's manifesto is articulated explicitly in a short introduction by the editors, whose opening sentence declares "This book is about the reinvention of landscape art in Canada" (3). With such a bold aim as their stated goal,